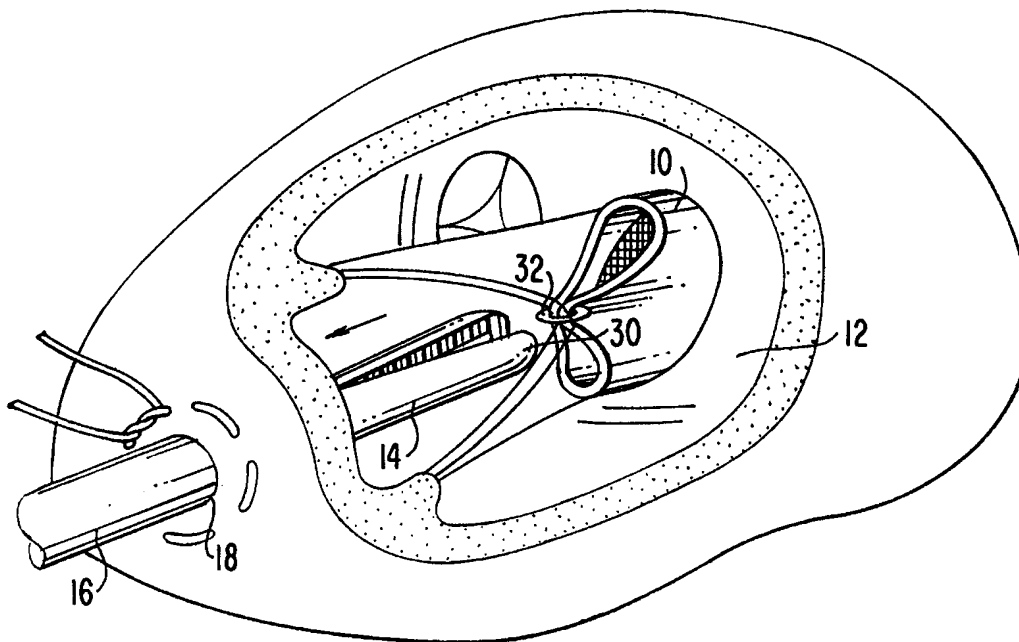




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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR CIRCULATORY VALVE REPAIR



(57) Abstract

An apparatus (16) for the repair of a cardiovascular valve having leaflets comprises a grasper (16) capable of grabbing, and co-apt the leaflets of the valve. Preferably the grasper (16) has jaws (30) that grasp, immobilize the leaflets, and then a fastener (32) is inserted to co-apt the leaflets. The apparatus (16) is particularly useful for repairing mitral valves to cure mitral regurgitation.

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METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR CIRCULATORY VALVE REPAIR

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to the field of circulatory valve repair. More particularly, the present invention relates to the field of the repair of heart valves and specifically for the repair of mitral heart valves, for
5 patients suffering from mitral regurgitation.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

There are four valves in the heart that serve to direct
10 the flow of blood through the two sides of the heart in a forward direction. On the left side, the mitral and aortic valves direct oxygenated blood coming from the lungs, through the left side of the heart, into the aorta for distribution to the body. On the right side, the tricuspid valve, located
15 between the right atrium and the right ventricle, and the pulmonary valve, located between the right ventricle and the pulmonary artery, direct de-oxygenated blood coming from the body, through the right side of the heart, into the pulmonary artery for distribution to the lungs. The anatomy of the
20 heart and the structure and terminology of heart valves are described and illustrated in detail in numerous reference works on anatomy and cardiac surgery, including standard texts such as *Surgery of the Chest* (Sabiston and Spencer, eds., Saunders Publ., Philadelphia) and *Cardiac Surgery* by
25 Kirklin and Barrett-Boyes, Pathology and Abnormalities of Heart Valves, incorporated herein by reference.

All four heart valves are passive structures in that they do not themselves expend any energy and do not perform any active contractile function. They consist of moveable
30 "leaflets" that are designed simply to open and close in response to differential pressures on either side of the

valve. The mitral valve has two leaflets and the triscupid--
valve has three. The aortic and pulmonary valves are
referred to as "semilunar valves" because of the unique
appearance of their leaflets, which are most aptly termed
5 "cusps" and are shaped somewhat like a half-moon. The
components of the mitral valve assembly include the mitral
valve annulus; the anterior leaflet; the posterior leaflet;
two papillary muscles which are attached at their bases to
the interior surface of the left ventricular wall; and
10 multiple chordae tendineae, which couple the mitral valve
leaflets to the papillary muscles.

. The problems that can develop with valves can be
classified into two categories: (1) stenosis, in which a
valve does not open properly, or (2) insufficiency, or
15 regurgitation, in which a valve does not close properly.

Mitral regurgitation ("MR") is caused by dysfunction of
the mitral subvalvular apparatus or direct injury to the
valve leaflets. Multiple etiologies can lead to mitral
regurgitation, with myxomatous degeneration of the valve and
20 ischemic heart disease accounting for close to 60% of cases.

Repair of the diseased valve requires major surgery on
cardiopulmonary bypass to allow access to the valve.
Consequently, some patients in the early or late stages of
the disease are not considered appropriate candidates due to
25 the high risk associated with the operation. Multiple
studies have demonstrated that prosthetic replacement of the
mitral valve can lead to significant postoperative left
ventricular dysfunction and often requires lifelong treatment
with anticoagulants. Mitral valve repair, using a posterior
30 annuloplasty ring, has demonstrated improved results with
better ventricular recovery. Nevertheless, recent studies
performed by the inventors (Umana et al., Surg Forum 1997)
have revealed that posterior ring annuloplasty causes changes

in ventricular geometry that lead to paradoxical movement of the normal papillary muscles, further deteriorating ventricular performance. In contrast, the "bow-tie" repair in which the anterior and posterior leaflets of the mitral valve are fixed in opposition appears to enhance annular contractility while preserving ventricular architecture. This has resulted in improved postoperative ventricular function almost uniformly.

The present invention addresses the needs of all patients with mitral regurgitation without mitral stenosis, including those who heretofore may have been excluded due to having only moderate MR or being too sick to be candidates for major surgery.

The present invention finds utility not only for the repair of mitral valves but for all valves of the circulatory system, including aortic valves, tricuspid valves, and venous valves.

Techniques for improving the efficacy of corporeal valves are known. For example, Laufer et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,609,598 describes a valving system for treatment of chronic venous insufficiency. The system has inherent limitations in terms of its effectiveness for the procedure described and its applicability, if any, to other valves, especially cardiac valves.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to a method and apparatus for use in heart valve repair involving the use of an inserted device or grasper for grabbing and clasp together the anterior and posterior leaflets of the valve, by insertion into the left ventricle through the right chest via a thoroscope, through the jugular vein, or through the

femoral artery. The grasper will grab both leaflets, preferably after the heart has been stopped or slowed pharmacologically. The correctness of the initial grasp is assessed by, for example, intraoperative echocardiography, to ensure, for example, in the case of the mitral valve, that the mitral regurgitation is resolved. If not, the grasper will be able to "adjust" the leaflets to allow better coaptation or, if needed, re-grab the leaflets in a different location.

10 Either inherent to the grasper, as an integrally attached component or as a separate device, a fastening device is introduced and a fastener is deployed to securely hold the leaflets in place after the grasper has been released. The remaining portion of the device, or optionally
15 any separate device, is then removed.

Accessory devices needed for the procedure include instruments for thoracoscopic or percutaneous approaches. While the preferred method and apparatus described hereinbelow is discussed with reference to its use in
20 connection with mitral valve repair, it is contemplated that the same or substantially similar apparatus and methodology would also be useful in repairing other valves found in the human circulatory systems, particularly other heart valves, such as, for example, venous valves, aortic valves and
25 tricuspid valves, amongst others.

OBJECTS OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the invention to provide a method for the repair of heart valves to increase their efficiency.

30 It is a further object of the invention to provide for a method for the repair of mitral valves to reduce mitral regurgitation.

It is also an object of the invention to provide for a method for the repair of the mitral valves which eliminates the need for cardiopulmonary bypass surgery.

It is a further object of the invention to provide for an apparatus for percutaneous insertion into the heart to effect the repair of a heart valve.

It is a yet further object of the invention to provide for the repair of a mitral valve by percutaneous insertion of a grasping and fastening device into the heart to repair a mitral valve and reduce or eliminate mitral regurgitation.

These and other objects of the invention will become apparent to one skilled in the art from the more detailed description given below.

15

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIGS. 1 to 4 are each a schematic representation of a portion of the human heart showing the mitral valve, the left ventricle and an apparatus of the invention in operation;

FIG. 5 is a schematic representation of an embodiment of the distal portion of an apparatus of the invention useful for grasping a mitral valve;

FIG. 6 is a schematic representation of an embodiment of a distal portion of an apparatus of the invention showing a configuration of a fastener holder and a fastener clip in the open position;

FIG. 7 is a schematic representation of an embodiment of FIG. 6 showing the release and closure of the fastener clip;

FIG. 8 is a detailed, partly cross-sectional schematic representation of the distal end of a preferred embodiment of a grasper device according to the invention in the open position;

FIG. 9 is a detailed, partly cross-sectional schematic--
representation of the preferred embodiment of a grasper
device according to the invention shown in FIG. 8 in a closed
position depicting the translocated adjustable grasper and
5 fastener anvil within the jaws;

FIG. 10 is a cross-sectional representation across line
10-10 of the adjustable grasper shown in FIG. 9;

FIG. 11 is a detailed schematic representation of a
preferred embodiment of the grasper device of the apparatus
10 of the invention in the closed position with the integral
closure means shown;

FIG. 12 is a detailed schematic representation of the
preferred embodiment depicted in FIG. 9 showing the closure
means piercing the leaflets of the valve;

15 FIG. 13 is a detailed, partly cross-sectional schematic
representation of yet another preferred embodiment of the
distal end of a grasper device according to the invention
showing the use of a coil closure means;

FIGS. 14, 15, and 16 are partly cross-sectional
20 schematic representations of another embodiment of the
invention, wherein a self-closing closure is used;

FIG. 17 is a schematic representation of the self-
sealing closure;

FIGS. 18 and 19 are schematic representations of an
25 embodiment of the invention with a three-piece closure;

FIG. 20 is a schematic representation of an embodiment
of the invention with a three-piece closure;

FIGS. 21 and 22 are oblique, schematic representations
of a valve leaflet closure useful according to the invention;

30 FIG. 23 is a partial cross-sectional view of the closure

shown in FIGS. 21 and 22;

FIG. 24 is an oblique, schematic representation of another valve leaflet closure useful according to the invention;

5 FIG. 25 is a partial cross-sectional view of the closure in FIG. 24 in position;

FIGS. 26 to 28 are each an oblique, schematic representation of a spiral coil valve leaflet closure useful according to the invention;

10 FIG. 29 is an oblique schematic representation of a U-shaped valve leaflet closure useful according to the invention; and

FIG. 30 is a partly cross-sectional view of the closure shown in FIG. 29.

15 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The invention can perhaps be better appreciated by making reference to the drawings. In FIG. 1 a portion of the human heart is depicted showing a mitral valve 10, a left ventricle 12 and the distal end 14 of a grasper apparatus of the invention 16, which has been inserted through an incision 18 in left ventricle 12. Incision 18 is loosely sutured with sutures 20 to loosely hold distal end 18 and to prevent bleeding.

25 Mitral valve 10 comprises anterior leaflet or cusp 22 and posterior leaflet or cusp 24, as well as two commissural cusps (not shown). The primary intent of the invention herein is to secure the distal sections 26 and 28 of cusps 22 and 24, respectively, together or substantially adjacent.

30 As can be seen in FIG. 2, the jaws 30 of distal end 14 are separated and positioned exterior to cusps 22 and 24.

Then, as shown in FIG. 3, jaws 30 are clamped together to --
cause cusp distal sections 26 and 28 to come together. Once
a closure is embedded, such as the loop closure 32 in FIG. 4,
jaws 30 are opened slightly so that distal section 14 can be
5 withdrawn.

The distal ends of the grasper means can vary greatly.
It is contemplated that a variety of grasper means may be
employed having differing grasper configurations and
elements. For example, it is contemplated that the grasper
10 means could be of the type wherein one side of the grasper is
stationary and the other side movable. Alternatively, the
grasper means might be of the type wherein both sides are
movable in concert. Another alternative arrangement
comprises a grasper means having multiple grasper elements to
15 enable one to grasp and hold the leaflets of the valve in
multiple locations. It is also contemplated that the grasper
elements themselves might comprise one or more suction
elements to secure and hold the valve leaflets in place.
Preferably the grasper will have the capacity to adjust the
20 leaflets of, for example, a mitral valve to obtain optimal
coaptation.

In addition it is contemplated that the grasper may
comprise additional technology to facilitate the operation of
the grasper. For example, the grasper may have echo doppler
25 probe or a similar visualization technology that would allow
even better localization of the leaflets and confirmation of
ideal coaptation.

FIG. 5 depicts the grasper end 36 of a percutaneous
apparatus 38 with jaws 40 in the open position. Jaws 40 of
30 grasper end 36 are movably engaged about joint 42 such that
the jaws may be easily and freely opened or closed by the
operator of the percutaneous apparatus.

Depicted in FIG. 6 is an embodiment of the invention showing one possible configuration of a fastener holder 44 with a fastener clip 46 in place held in the open position for placement over the grasped leaflets of a mitral valve.

5 The fastener holder 44 and fastener clip 46 may be integral with a grasper end as shown in FIG. 5 or separate from it, in which case it will be necessary to also provide a secondary percutaneous means for use in delivering and manipulating the fastener holder 44 and releasing and fixing the fastener clip
10 46 in the proper position about the leaves of a mitral valve, once they have been properly grasped by jaws 40 of grasper end 36.

FIG. 7 is a more detailed schematic representation of the fastener holder 44 with its jaws 48 in their open
15 position and fastener clip 46 in place in the open position (dotted line). Also shown is fastener clip 46 in its released, closed position. Fastener clip 46, which may have a closed diameter of from about 3 to 7 mm, preferably about 5 mm, will be comprised of a suitable material such as
20 stainless steel, nitinol, or titanium.

FIG. 8 depicts a detailed, partly cross-sectional schematic representation of a preferred embodiment of the grasper device of the present invention, comprising grasper end 50, movable jaws 52 which are movably engaged about joint
25 54, in the open position, in proximity to valve leaflets 56. Each jaw 52 has a protruding grasping surface 58. However, the grasping surface 58 of one jaw 52 is operatively and slidably connected to a control member 60 to enable one to properly align valve leaflets 56, prior to fastening.

30 In FIG. 9 the grasper device of the apparatus of the invention shown in FIG. 8 is in a closed position. Moveable jaws 52 have protruding grasper surfaces 58, which engage valve leaflets 56. Leaflets 56 are translocated to a more

optimum position for fastening by the action of control member 60 on one of protruding grasping surfaces 58, as shown in FIG. 11. Also, stapler action rod 68 is now operatively connected to stapler control member 70.

5 FIG. 10 is a schematic representation of a cross section of the adjustable grasper depicted in FIG. 9. The jaws comprise grasper surfaces 58, an upper anvil 62 with recess 71, and a lower anvil 64 within which is located a staple type fastener 66 to effect the fastening of valve leaflets.

10 As shown in FIGS. 9, 11, and 12, lower anvil 64 has at least one slanted surface member 72. When stapler action rod 68 is forced distally against slanted surface member 72, stapler fastener 66 is forced through leaflets 56 into upper anvil 62 to close stapler fastener 66.

15 In another embodiment of the invention shown in FIG. 13, a grasper 80 comprises jaws 82,84. Jaw 82 is movably connected to rod 86 at pivot point 87, and jaw 84 is movably connected at pivot point 88 to rod 90. Rod 92 is movably connected to jaw 84 at pivot 94. Operation of rods 90 and 92
20 causes jaws 82 and 84 to open and close on valve leaflets 96. Axial to grasper 80 is a sheath 98 containing a drive mechanism 100 for rotating coil fastener 102. Coil fastener 102 advances in a spiral mode piercing leaflets 96 in multiple locations as coil 102 is advanced into its final
25 position.

Rods 86, 90, and 92 are each operatively connected to one or more control mechanisms (not shown). Also, distal section jaws 82,84 may be slidable within grasper sheath 81.

Another device 110 of the invention is shown in FIGS. 14
30 to 16, where jaws 112 are operatively connected to a handle mechanism (not shown). Device 110 comprises a movable sheath 114 that contains a straightened closure fastener 116 that is

capable of resuming or forming a circular shape to coapt valve leaflets (not shown). Device 110 has a slidably extruding grasping surface 118 that is operatively connected to the handle mechanism.

5 Once jaws 112 are closed, the distal tip of sheath 114 is advanced distally to be adjacent grasping surface 118 and its cooperating grasping surface 122. A pusher 124 coerces fastener 116 to advance out of the distal end 126 of sheath 114 to form a circular shape. Fastener 116 in this shape
10 will coapt valve leaflets 120, as can be seen in FIG. 17.

 The device 130 of the invention shown in FIGS. 18 and 19 is intended to form a three-piece closure device. Jaws 132 each removably hold a closure member 134 having a grasping surface 136. Located axially with device 130 is a closure
15 crimping 138 that is removably fastened at the distal end 140 of a device rod 142. When jaws 132 grasp valve leaflets 144, closure crimping 138 is advanced distally by device rod 142 to fit over the proximal ends of closure members 134. The closure formed is shown in FIG. 20.

20 While a typical grasper means configuration would normally require the use of at least one control wire to actuate the grasper element(s), it is contemplated that multiple separate control wires could also be effectively employed and manipulated from the proximal end of the system
25 to allow for the precise control of the individual grasper elements.

 With regard to the fastening means employed, as noted above it is contemplated that the fastening means may be constituted as a single apparatus operating in concert with
30 the grasper means. Alternatively, the fastening means may be constituted as an entirely separate device which is totally independent of the grasper means. More preferably the

fastening means will be a separate device which will function using a monorail type system, wherein the fastening means will operate independently of the grasper means, but will ride via a loop over the same guidewire/catheter which houses
5 and guides the grasper means.

While the preferred fastener depicted is in the form of a clip or staple, it is also contemplated that the fasteners employed to secure the leaflets of the valve may be of a variety of different configurations, each of which would
10 function with greater or lesser effectiveness depending upon the operative conditions which prevail. In addition to clips or staples it is also contemplated that the following types of fasteners may also be effectively employed: coils, sutures, dual button fasteners, cufflink-like fasteners, and
15 the like.

Suitable suture fasteners would include those which might require an appropriate mechanism to automatically suture tissue. Coil fasteners would generally be provided with sharpened ends to allow one to screw these fasteners
20 into place by threading the sharpened end through the tissue of the valve leaflet.

With reference to FIGS. 21 to 23 which depict a sequential representation of the closure of valve leaflets using one preferred closure means, shown in FIG. 22 is a clip
25 type closure 150 being inserted through valve leaflets 152. FIG. 22 shows the clip type closure 150 in the fastened position. FIG. 23 is a cross-sectional view of the clip type closure 150 depicted in FIG. 23. Each closure 150 as shown in FIG. 21 would have a thickness of from about 0.5 to 1.8
30 mm, preferably about 1 mm, a width of from about 0.3 to 0.7 cm, preferably about 0.5 cm, and a length of from about 0.6 to 1.4 cm, preferably about 1 cm.

FIGS. 24 and 25 are each a schematic representation of the insertion of another preferred closure means of the invention. A staple-type closure 156 is inserted through valve leaflets 158, and then closed, as shown in FIG. 26.

5 Closure 156 would preferably have an overall length (including sides) of from about 1 to 4 cm, preferably about 3 cm, an effective diameter of from about 0.1 to 0.5 mm, preferably about 0.3 mm, and an opening of from about 0.5 to 1.3 cm, preferably about 1 cm.

10 FIGS. 26 to 28 are each a schematic representation of the insertion of yet another preferred closure. A spiral coil closure 160 can be inserted across valve leaflets 162 in longitudinal, latitudinal, or transverse fashion, by use of, for example, the device shown in FIG. 13. Coils 160 will
15 preferably have pointed ends and will have external dimensions comprising a length of from about 3 to 7 cm, preferably about 5 cm, and a diameter of from about 1 to 3 mm, preferably about 2 mm.

The overall diameter and/or the differential turns of
20 coil 160 may be uniform or they may vary. For example, the diameter at each end of coil 160 could be the same as, greater than, or less than the diameter of the middle portion of the coil. Similarly, the ratio of the turns of the coil to the length, i.e., the pitch, could be consistent or the
25 pitch could be greater or less at each end of the coil. The diameter of the coil wire will preferably be consistent.

Each coil 160 would have a length of from about 3 to 7 cm, preferably about 5 cm, with a diameter of from about 1 to 3 mm, preferably about 2 mm, and a coil wire diameter of from
30 about 0.2 to 0.4 mm. The winding of coil 160 should be from about 5 to 10 turns/cm in an unstressed condition.

In FIGS. 29 and 30 a U-shaped barbed clip-type closure

164 is applied to leaflet 166.

The device and fasteners used according to the invention must be comprised of biocompatible, nonimmunogenic materials.

The grasper is preferably comprised of rigid materials such as titanium, nitinol, stainless steel, or rigid polymeric material such as polyethylene or polyurethane. The clips, staples, coils, etc., are preferably comprised of titanium, nitinol, or stainless steel. In some instances fasteners comprised of molded polymeric material may also be useful.

There are four different approaches which one might take to effect a repair of the mitral heart valve according to the invention:

Such a procedure might be undertaken while the patient is on by-pass with an open-chest, either transapically or transatrially. A median sternotomy is performed and the patient is placed on cardiopulmonary bypass by cannulating the ascending aorta and the right atrium. A purse-string suture is then placed on the apex of the left ventricle and a stab incision performed to insert the instrument which will grasp and attach the mitral valve leaflets. Once adequate repair of the valve is attained, the instrument is removed and the air evacuated from the left ventricle through the apical incision. The ventricle is then repaired using conventional wound closure techniques.

Alternatively, the grasper can be introduced through a similar stab incision performed over the roof of the left atrium. The grasper will cross the valve and then be manipulated to revert to grasp the leaflets from the atrial side and place the suturing device, just as postulated from the transventricular approach. Once adequacy of repair is confirmed, the device is extracted and the atriotomy closed using conventional wound closure techniques.

This procedure can alternatively be performed with the patient off bypass, through either a left or right thoracotomy or a sternotomy incision. The technique would be similar to that outlined for repair of mitral regurgitation on cardiopulmonary bypass. After opening the chest, the patient is placed on medication (beta-blocker) to slow the heart rate to approximately 40 beats per minute. This allows adequate echocardiographic visualization of the leaflets in order to grasp and attach them.

10 Third, such a procedure can be undertaken thorascopically. The patient is intubated selectively in order to collapse the left lung, and percutaneous ports are inserted in to the left chest allowing visualization of the apex of the heart or left atrium. Through a separate port, 15 the device is introduced into the thoracic cavity and subsequently into the left ventricle through the apex. Previously, a purse-string or triangular suture had been placed around the tip of the ventricle to control bleeding around the ventricular entry site. Subsequent steps of the 20 repair are identical to those described for patients with an open chest, off bypass.

Should the operation require the patient to be placed on bypass, this can be attained percutaneously from the groin by cannulating the femoral artery and vein. This technique 25 could prove particularly useful in the early stages of development of the technique, since the surgeon would be able to operate on a decompressed heart and slow or cease the heart rate as needed, without hemodynamic compromise.

Lastly, a percutaneous approach to repair of the mitral 30 valve would be possible with this invention by inserting the device either through the femoral artery or jugular vein. When using the former, the left ventricle is reached by placing the device across the aortic valve. The leaflets

will be grasped by turning the tip of the instrument approximately 160° from the entry angle. As previously stated, the grasper's tips are adjusted to obtain optimal apposition and the suturing device delivered. If a transvenous approach is employed, the left atrium is entered through the interatrial septum and the leaflets are handled as described for the transatrial technique.

To determine the relative efficacy of the method of the invention in effecting the repair of heart valves such as mitral valves a number of procedures were performed on both animal and human test subjects as follows:

Animal Testing

Six adult sheep underwent ligation of OM2 and OM3 through a left thoracotomy to induce chronic ischemic MR. After 8 weeks, animals were placed on cardiopulmonary bypass. Using a posterior approach to the left atrium, a bow-tie repair was performed. A posterior suture annuloplasty (DeVega) served as control. Snares were placed on both repairs to allow alternate tightening during measurements. Ten 2-mm piezo-electric crystals were sutured around the MV annulus and at the bases and tips of the papillary muscles. Six crystals were secured to the apex (1), septum (1), and epicardial short axis of the left ventricle (4) for 3-dimensional sonomicrometry array localization (3D-SAL) imaging. 3D-SAL measurements were performed after weaning from cardiopulmonary bypass at baseline and with each type of repair. Echocardiography was used to measure MR, MV area, and fractional shortening.

TABLE 1
MR, mitral valve area, and fractional shortening

	MR	FS	MVA (cm ²)
Baseline	3.3	0.46	5.4
DeVega	1.4	0.53	3.9
Bow-tie	1.2	0.57	3.3

FS = fractional shortening; MVA = mitral valve area
(planimetry).

* $P = 0.0159$ vs. baseline

** $P = 0.0079$ vs. baseline

As shown from the results presented in Table 1, MR decreased significantly with both repairs compared with baseline. Post-operative improvements in fractional shortening was greater in the bow-tie group but did not reach statistical significance. MVA, measured by planimetry, decreased more with the bow-tie repair; nevertheless, the resultant areas were still substantial without evidence of a transvalvular gradient. Mitral valve annular contractility (% area change = (maximum area - minimum area) / maximum area) by 3D-SAL increased from $19.7\% \pm 4.0\%$ at baseline to $21.5\% \pm 3.2\%$ after bow-tie repair ($P = 0.026$). Suture annuloplasty decreased annular contractility to $15.7\% \pm 3.6\%$ ($P = 0.0011$ vs. baseline, and $P = 0.0001$ vs. bow-tie).

The results obtained suggest that current techniques of mitral valve repair in ischemic MR may further impair left ventricular performance by limiting systolic function of the annulus and base of the heart. The bow-tie repair technique which is the subject of the present invention controls MR and directly addresses subvalvular dysfunction resulting in improved annular and left ventricular function.

Human Testing

The charts of eleven patients (five males and six females) undergoing mitral valve repair in conjunction with a central leaflet suture ("bow-tie" repair) were reviewed.

5 Patients were operated on between August 1996 and April 1997. Mean age was 68 years (range, 44 to 78). Etiology of mitral regurgitation (MR) was ischemic in nine patients and degenerative in two. Mitral regurgitation was attributed to ischemia if any of the following criteria proposed by Radford
10 et al. was met: (1) rupture of a papillary muscle chord or head (n=3); (2) infarction of the papillary muscle in the absence of leaflet pathology (n=3); (3) clear history of new onset or worsening of mitral regurgitation after documented myocardial infarction (n=3).

15 The diagnosis of MR was established by echocardiography in 10/10 patients, and semiquantitatively graded as severe (4+), moderate/severe (3+), mild/moderate (2+), mild (1+), and trace. Left sided cardiac catheterization confirmed the presence of MR in nine patients and the presence of critical
20 coronary artery disease (CAD) invariably involving the circumflex and posterior descending artery territories in all patients with ischemic MR. Preoperative diagnoses and hemodynamics obtained during catheterization are shown in Table 2. All patients were in NYHA class III or IV at the
25 time of surgery.

Table 2. Preoperative diagnosis and hemodynamics.

Patient	Diagnosis	Age	CO	PCWP	v-wave
1	Unstable angina	59	4.2	30	80
2	CAD/torn post. chord	78	2.4	6	10
3	CAD	74	n/a	14	15
4	CAD/MIx3	64	n/a	n/a	n/a
5	Unstable angina/MIx2	44	4.0	26	41
6	Ischemic VSD	77	4.0	28	21
7	AI/MR	77	4.5	29	39
8	CAD/APM rupture	67	4.3	27	65
9	CAD/V-tach arrest	71	4.1	20	28
10	Degenerative MR	70	3.5	20	21
11	AMI/PPM rupture	67	4.1	33	60

AI-aortic insufficiency; AMI-acute myocardial infarction; APM-anterior papillary muscle; CAD-coronary artery disease; post-posterior; PPM-posterior papillary muscle; VSD-ventricular septal defect; v-tach-ventricular tachycardia

With the patient under anesthesia, the valve is visualized on transesophageal echocardiogram (TEE) and the likely mode of failure determined, with special emphasis on the presence of leaflet prolapse and site and direction of the regurgitant jet. After the heart was stopped, a bulb syringe with cold saline is used to distend the left ventricle and confirm the mode of valve failure. A conventional repair using an annuloplasty ring is generally performed and the valve is reinspected with saline injection.

If the leaflet edges do not oppose each other in a concentric circle parallel to the annuloplasty ring, and continued regurgitation is observed, then a "bow-tie" repair is initiated. If the repair is performed from the transventricular or transaortic exposure, a single figure of eight 4-0 prolene suture is placed without screening leaflet

eight 4-0 prolene suture is placed without screening leaflet coaptation. Using a 4-0 prolene suture, the anterior leaflet is attached to the corresponding posterior leaflet at the site of malapposition. The figure of 8 suture is placed
5 through each leaflet just as the edge turns down to attach to the primary chordae. This is usually the most cephalad site where the 2 leaflets would touch during systole and creates the largest area of coaptation possible.

At time the suture is very close to a commissure and the
10 result is a narrowing of single valve orifice. More commonly, the suture is closer to the center of the valve and a double orifice valve is created which resembles a "bow-tie". After visually confirming that the repair is satisfactory with cold saline injection, the atrium is
15 closed, the patient weaned from CPB, and an intraoperative TEE used to confirm the adequacy of the repair. Standard as well as exercise transthoracic echocardiograms were performed prior to discharge to establish the competency of the "bow-tie" repair as well as the absence of a significant gradient
20 across the valve.

Six patients were operated on electively for worsening MR leading to intractable congestive heart failure or unstable angina. Four patients underwent emergent operation due to acute worsening of MR secondary to ischemic anterior
25 papillary muscle rupture (n=2), acute MI with cardiogenic shock requiring intraaortic counterpulsation balloon, severe MR and malignant arrhythmias (N=1), and acute worsening of chronic degenerative MR (n=1). One patient had moderate (3+0 MR in association with critical aortic insufficiency. Mean
30 degree of preoperative MR by echo was 3.5 ± 0.7 , with mean ejection fraction (EF) of $42\% \pm 17\%$. Nine patients underwent preoperative cardiac catheterization. Mean pulmonary capillary wedge pressure was $23 \text{ mmHg} \pm 8 \text{ mmHg}$, with mean

atrial v-wave of 39 mmHg \pm 25 mmHg; mean CO as measured by thermodilution technique was 3.9 l/min (range 2.4 to 4.5 l/min) (Table 2). Concomitant procedures performed at the time of MR included coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG) in 5 eight patients. Of the two patients with a degenerative etiology of valvular disease, one required aortic valve replacement, whereas the second underwent posterior leaflet quadrangular resection and annuloplasty. Two patients, not included in this series, with end-stage congestive heart 10 failure (CHF) secondary to ventricular dilation had "bow-tie" repairs during partial left ventriculectomy. Nine patients had a posterior ring annuloplasty as primary procedure for treatment of MR (Table 3). One patient required repair of ischemic ventricular septal defect (VSD) through a 15 ventriculotomy, which made insertion of an annuloplasty ring impractical. This patient's mitral valve was successfully repaired with a "bow-tie" alone. A second patient presented with acute MR secondary to rupture of the anterior head of the ppm. Repair of the papillary muscle was performed using 20 pericardial pledgets. Due to the lack of annular dilatation and persistence of MR a "bow-tie" suture was placed without an annuloplasty ring. Control of MR assessed intraoperatively by direct cold saline injection and TEE was satisfactory in all patients.

Table 3. Operative indications and concomitant procedures

Patient	Operative indication	Other procedures
1	MR, unstable angina	CABG, C-E#28
2	Torn post chord, MR	Post quad resection, C-E #32
3	CAD, MR	CABG, C-E#32
4	CAD, MR	CABG, C-E#30
5	Unstable angina, MR	CABG, C-E#28
6	Ischemic VSD, MR	CABG
7	Critical AI, MR	AVR, C-E#30
8	CAD, ALM rupture, MR	CABG, C-E#26
9	CAD, MR	CABG, C-E#28
10	MR, CHF	C-E#30
11	PPM rupture, MR	CABG, primary PPM repair

AVR-aortic valve replacement; C-E Cosgrove ring; CHF congestive heart failure; PPM posterior papillary muscle

It will thus be seen that the objects set forth above, among those made apparent from the preceding description, are efficiently attained and, since certain changes may be made in the constructions set forth without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention, it is intended that all matter contained in the above description and shown in the accompanying drawings shall be interpreted as illustrative and not in a limiting sense.

It is also to be understood that the following claims are intended to cover all of the generic and specific features of the invention herein described and all statements of the scope of the invention which, as a matter of language, might be said to fall therebetween.

DRAWING COMPONENTS

	<u>No.</u>	<u>Component</u>
	10	mitral valve
	12	left ventricle
5	14	distal end of grasper
	16	grasper
	18	incision
	20	suture
	22	anterior leaflet or cusp
10	24	posterior leaflet or cusp
	26	anterior cusp distal section
	28	posterior cusp distal section
	30	jaw
	32	closure loop
15	36	grasper end
	38	percutaneous apparatus
	40	jaw
	42	joint
	44	fastener holder
20	46	fastener clip
	48	jaw
	50	grasper end
	52	jaw
	54	joint
25	56	valve leaflet
	58	protruding grasping surface
	60	control number
	62	upper anvil
	64	lower anvil
30	66	staple type fastener
	68	staple action rod
	71	recess
	72	anvil slanted surface

	80	grasper
	81	grasper sheath
	82	jaw
	84	jaw
5	86	rod
	87	pivot point
	88	pivot point
	90	rod
	92	rod
10	94	pivot
	96	valve leaflet
	98	sheath
	100	drive mechanism
	102	coil fastener
15	110	grasper device
	112	jaw
	114	sheath
	116	fastener
	118	grasping surface
20	120	leaflet
	122	cooperating grasping surface
	124	pusher
	130	grasper device
	132	jaw
25	134	closure member
	136	grasping surface
	138	closure crimper
	140	rod distal end
	142	device rod
30	144	valve leaflet
	150	clip-type closure
	152	valve leaflet
	156	staple-type closure
	158	valve leaflet

160	spiral closure
162	valve leaflet
164	barbed-clip closure
166	valve leaflet

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An apparatus for the repair of a cardiovascular valve having leaflets comprising a grasper capable of grabbing and coapting the leaflets of the valve.
- 5 2. The apparatus of Claim 1, where the valve to be repaired is a cardiac valve.
3. The apparatus of Claim 2, where the valve to be repaired is a mitral heart valve.
4. The apparatus of Claim 3, where the patient suffers
10 from mitral regurgitation.
5. The apparatus of Claim 2, where the valve to be repaired is an aortic valve.
6. The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the patient suffers from aortic insufficiency.
- 15 7. The apparatus of Claim 1, which comprises a coaptor to coapt the valve leaflets with a fastener.
8. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the grasper has a distal end comprising a multiplicity of jaws which are freely movable about a joint to permit a range of motion of said
20 jaws when the apparatus is manipulated by an operator.
9. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the grasper end is removable from the apparatus.
10. The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein the grasper distal end is disposable.
- 25 11. The apparatus of Claim 7, wherein the coaptor is adjunctive to, and capable of operating in concert with, the grasper distal end.
12. The apparatus of Claim 7, wherein the coaptor is separate from the grasper distal end.

13. The apparatus of Claim 1 which can be inserted percutaneously.

14. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the grasper is capable of adjusting the leaflets of the valve to obtain
5 optimal coaptation.

15. The apparatus of Claim 8, wherein the jaws of the grasper can be independently manipulated to ensure optimal valve leaflet apposition.

16. An apparatus for the repair of a cardiovascular
10 valve, comprising a grasper having two jaws each having a closure member removably attached thereto wherein each closure member has a proximal end and the grasper also comprises a positioning member that is capable of positioning a binding member around the closure member proximal ends to
15 secure the closure members together to coapt leaflets of the cardiovascular valve

17. A method of repairing a heart valve in a patient suffering from regurgitation or insufficiency wherein an apparatus of Claim 1 is inserted into a patient's heart, the
20 grasper is used to grasp and immobilize the leaflets of the valve, and a fastener is inserted to coapt the leaflets.

18. The method of Claim 17, wherein the apparatus is inserted into the heart through the chest via a thorascope.

19. The method of Claim 17, wherein the apparatus is
25 inserted through the jugular vein.

20. The method of Claim 17, wherein the apparatus is inserted through the femoral artery and advanced percutaneously.

21. The method of Claim 17, wherein the heart valve is
30 a mitral valve or an aortic valve.

22. The method of Claim 21, wherein the heart valve is

a mitral valve.

23. The method of Claim 21, wherein the heart valve is an aortic valve.

24. The method of Claim 17 for repairing a mitral valve
5 in a patient suffering from mitral valve regurgitation wherein the leaflets of the mitral valve are grasped and immobilized by jaws of the grasper and a fastener is inserted into the immobilized mitral valve leaflets to coapt the leaflets.

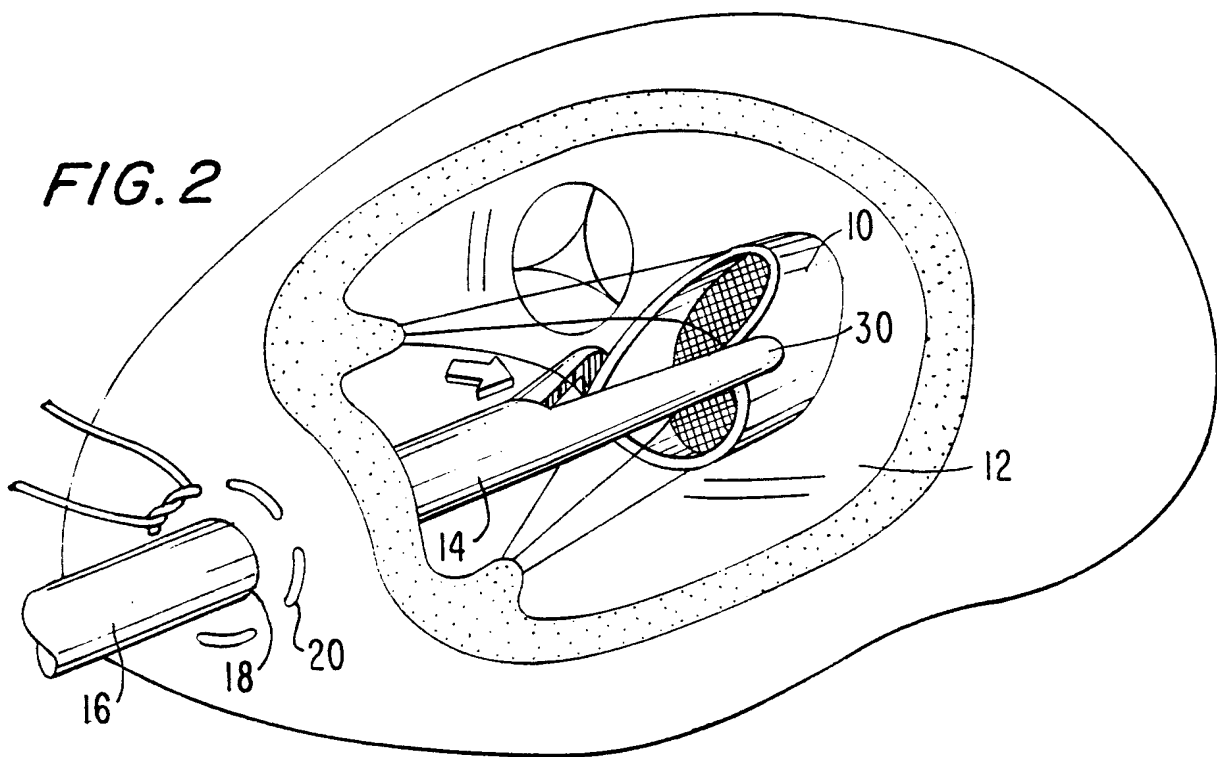
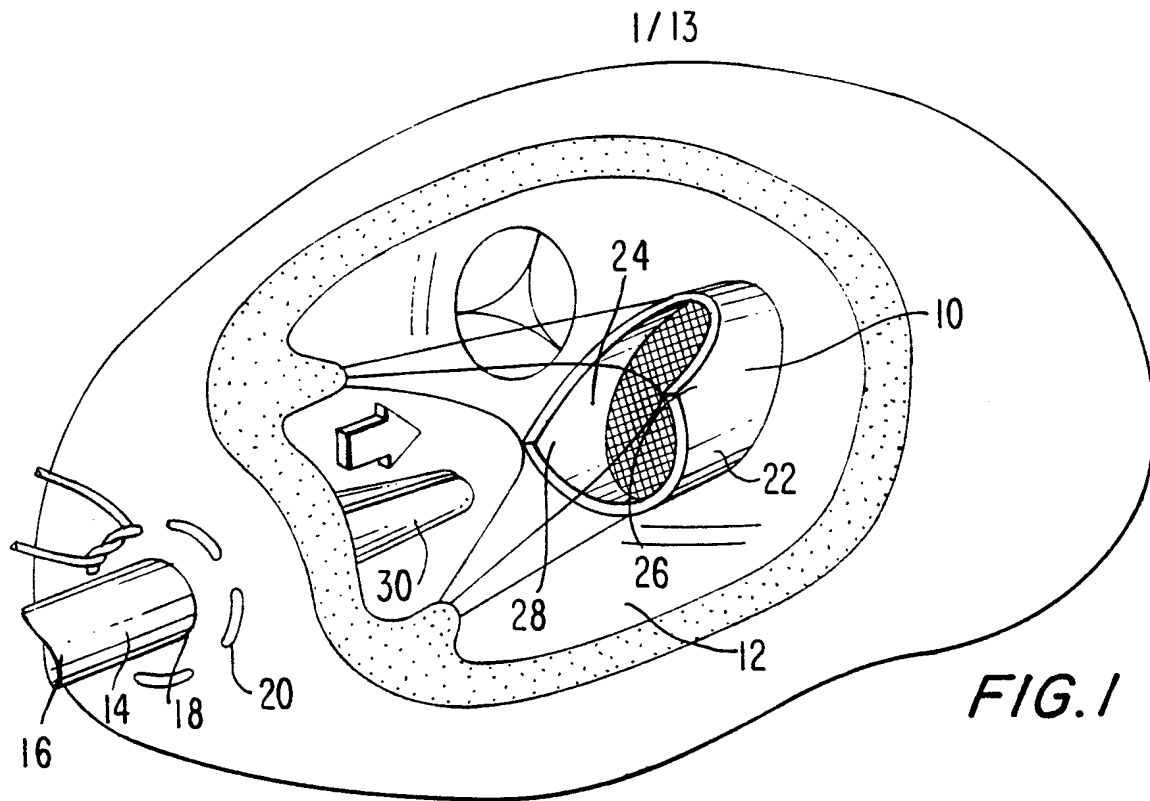
10 25. The method of Claim 17 for repairing an aortic valve in a patient suffering from aortic valve insufficiency wherein the leaflets of the aortic valve are grasped and immobilized by jaws of the grasper and a fastener is inserted into the immobilized aortic valve leaflets to coapt the
15 leaflets.

26. A method of repairing a heart valve in a patient suffering from regurgitation or insufficiency comprising:
inserting an apparatus of Claim 1 into a patient's heart;

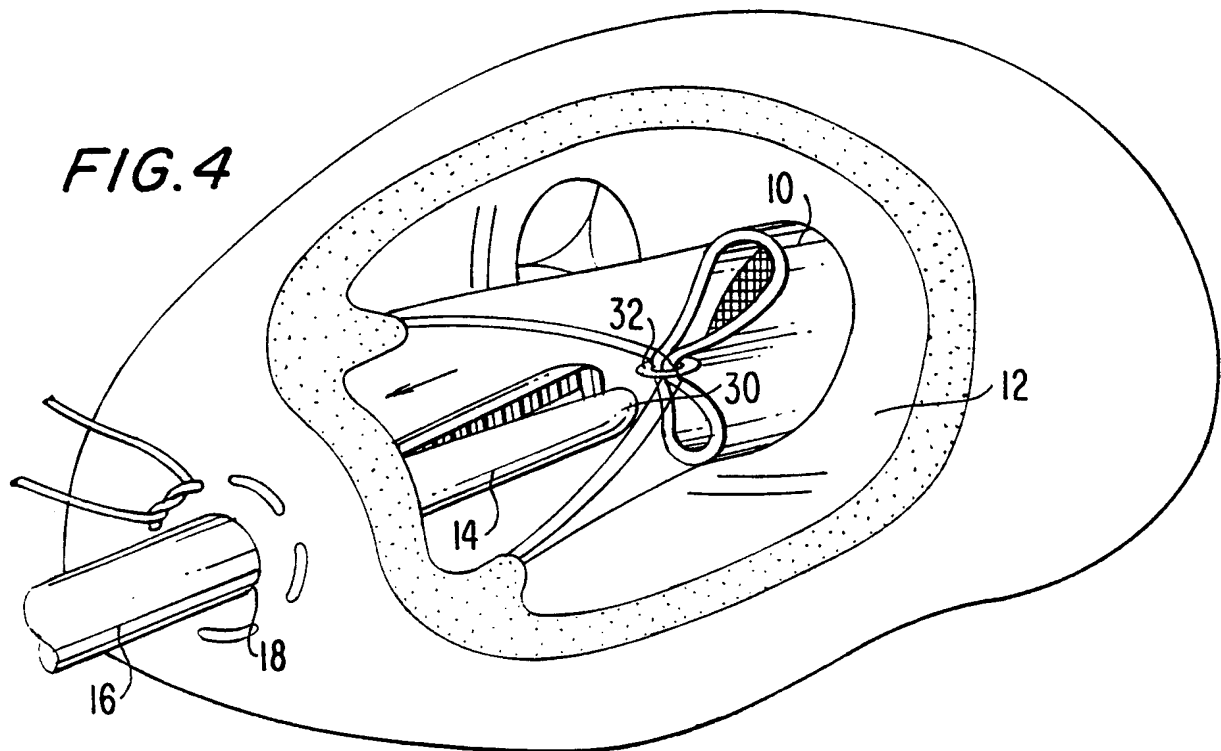
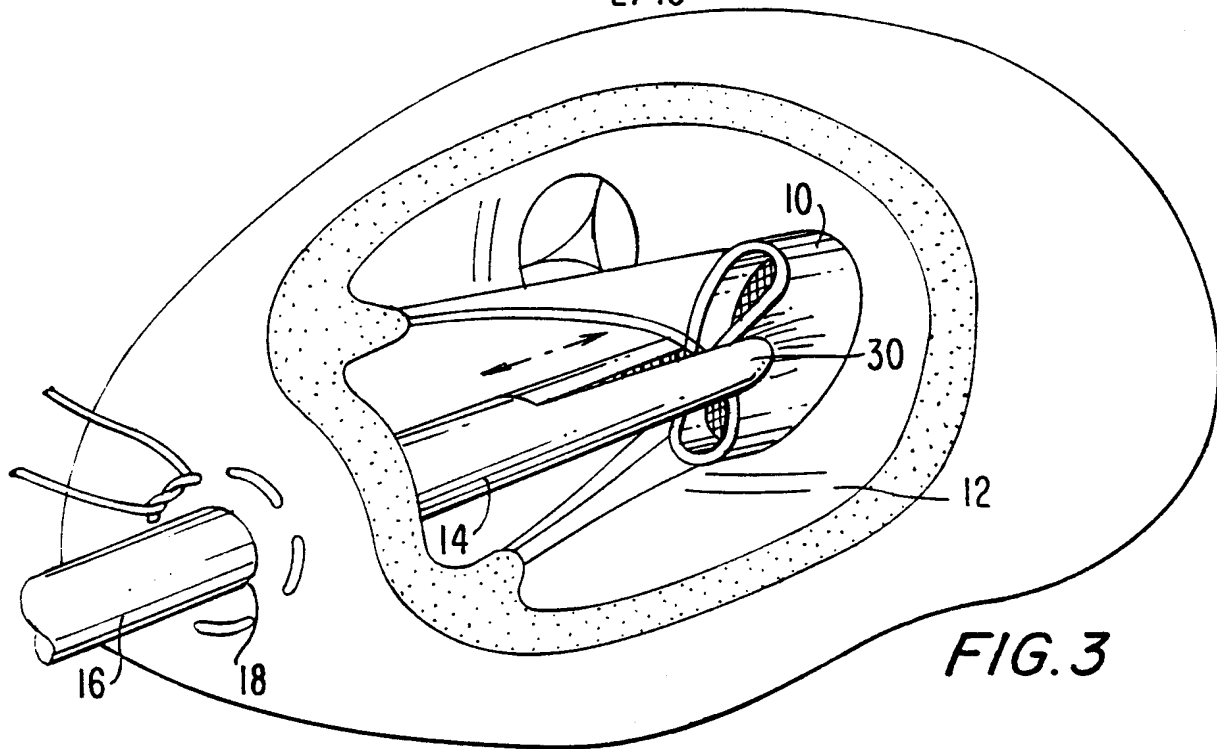
20 grasping the leaflets of the heart valve;
immobilizing said leaflets of the heart valve;
inserting a fastener into the patient's heart in proximity to the grasped valve leaflets;
coapting the leaflets of the said heart valve
25 together by affixing the fastener; and
removing the grasper while leaving the fastener in place.

27. The method of Claim 26, wherein the patient suffers from mitral regurgitation and a mitral valve is repaired.

30 28. The method of Claim 26, wherein the patient suffers from aortic insufficiency and an aortic valve is repaired.



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FIG. 5

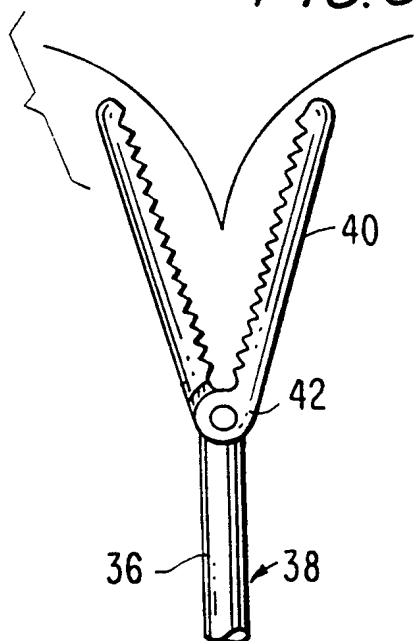


FIG. 6

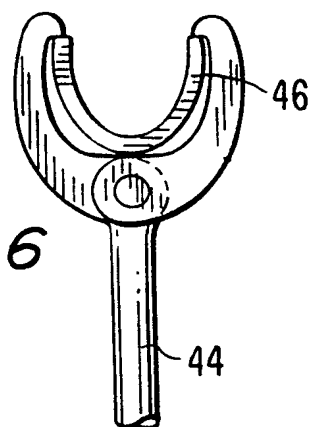
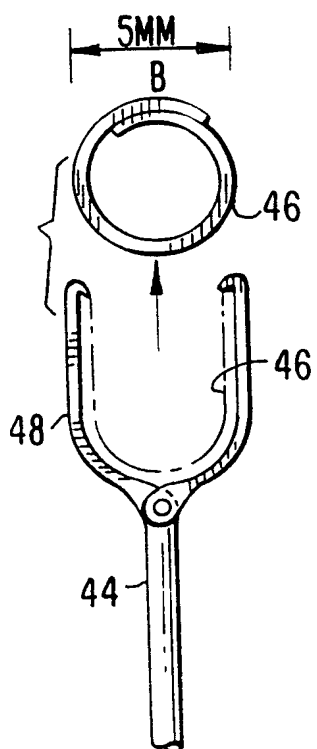


FIG. 7



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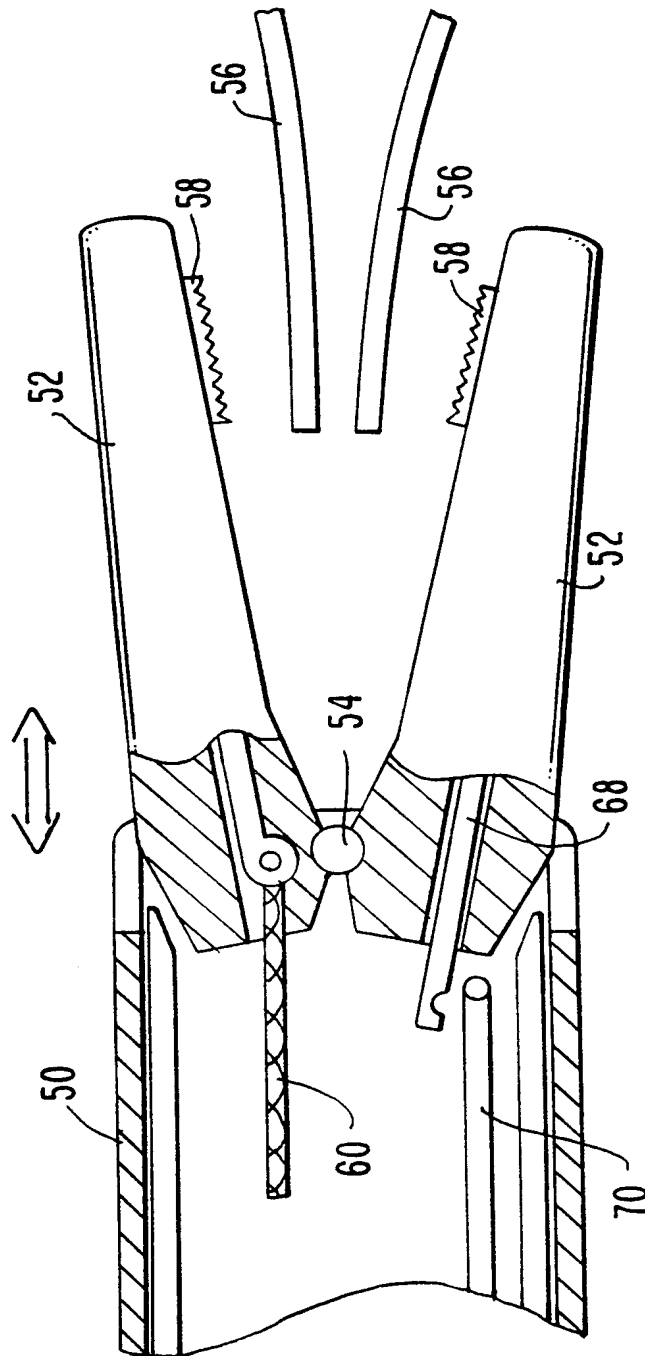


FIG. 8

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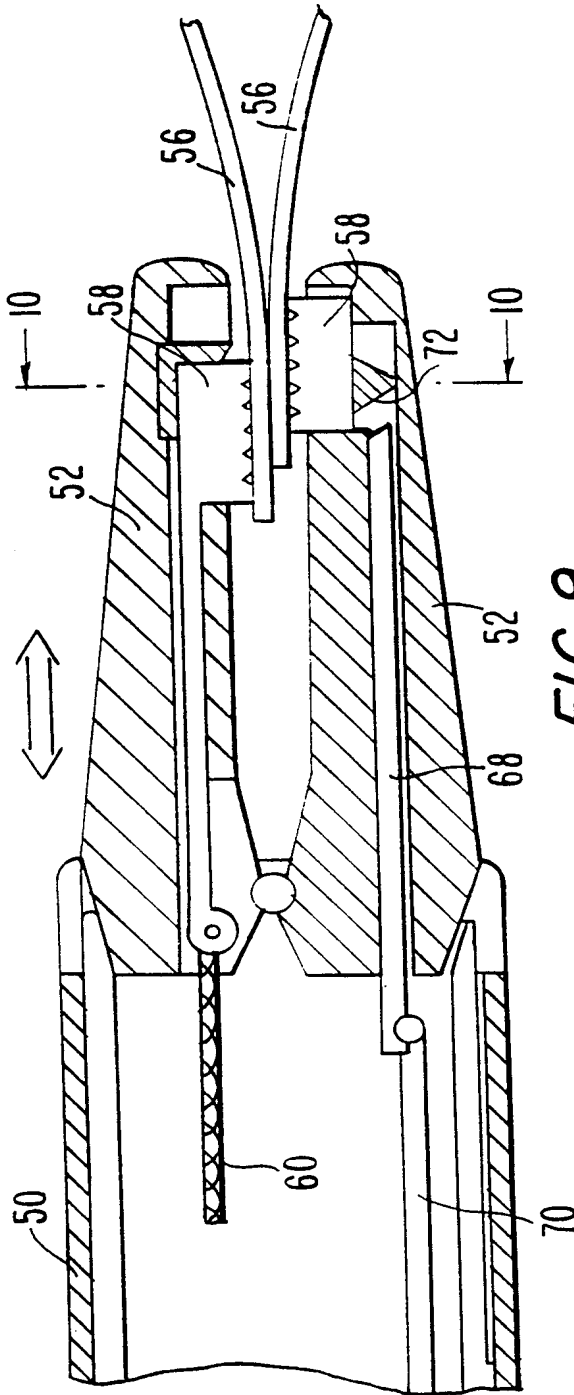


FIG. 9

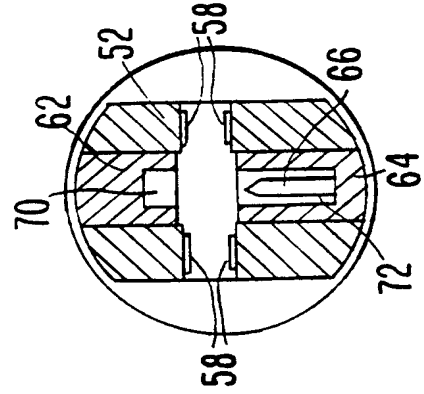
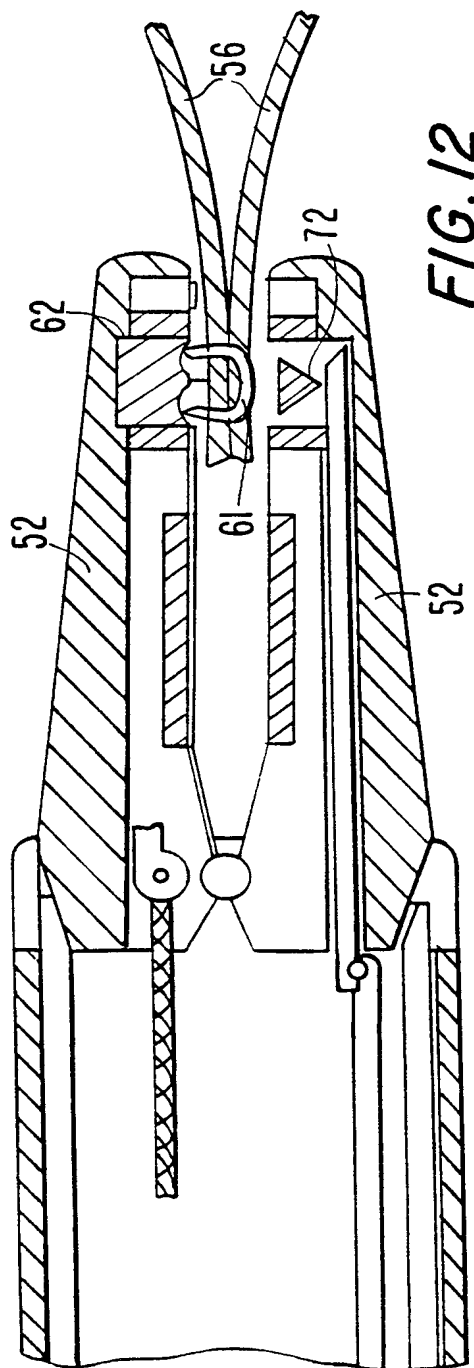
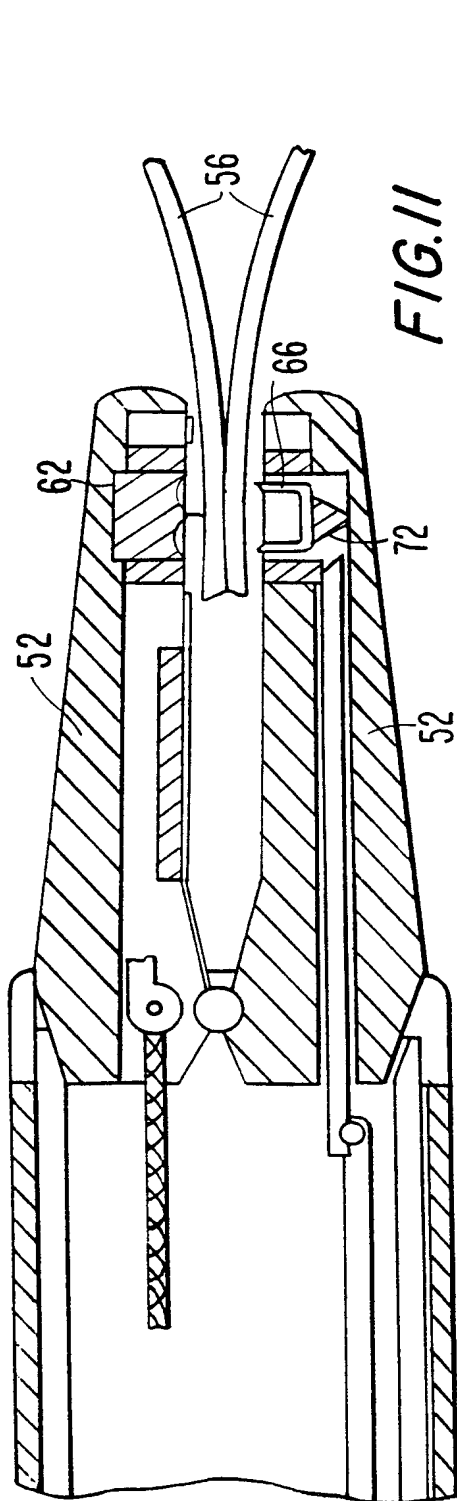
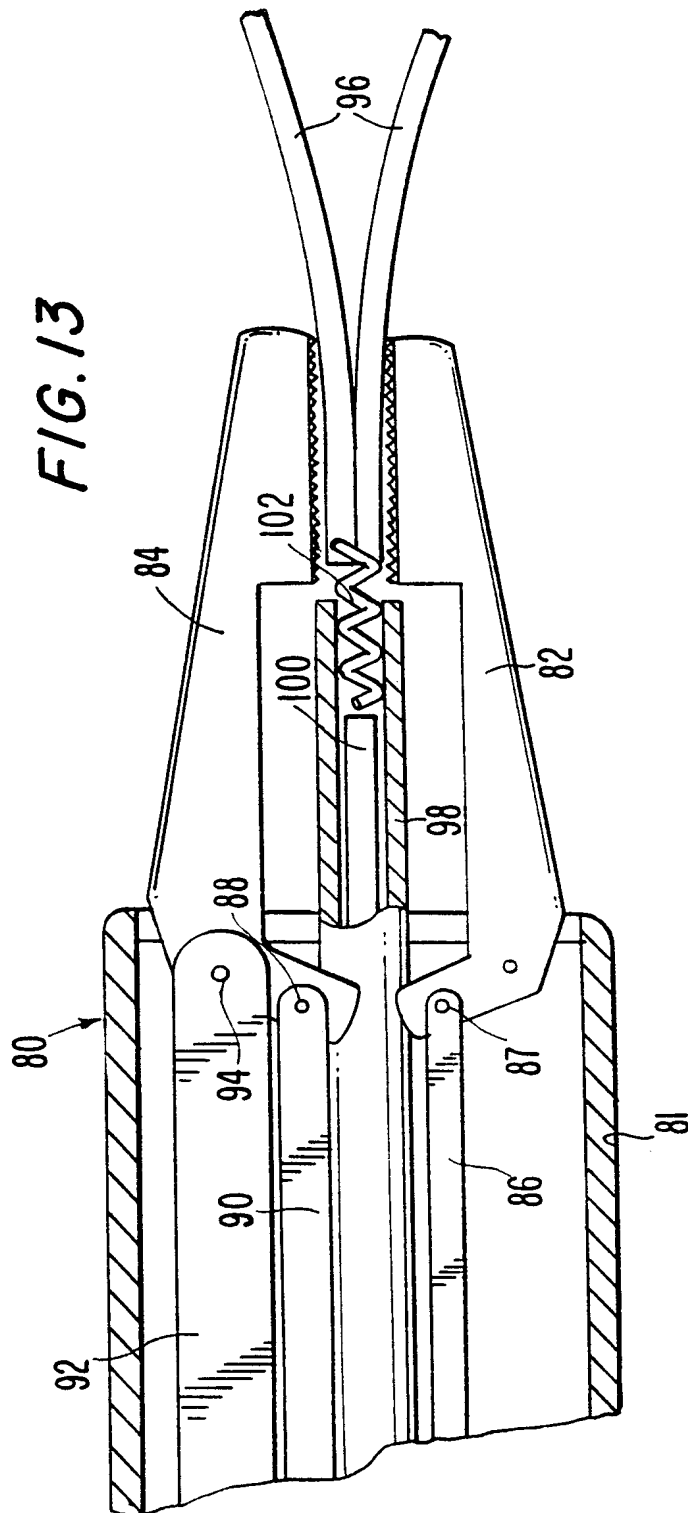


FIG. 10

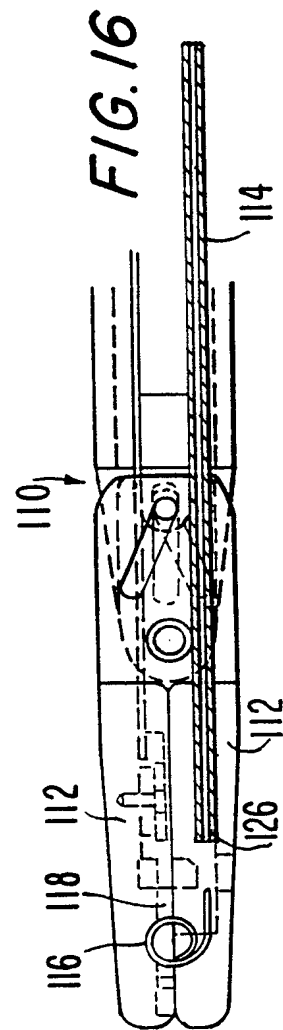
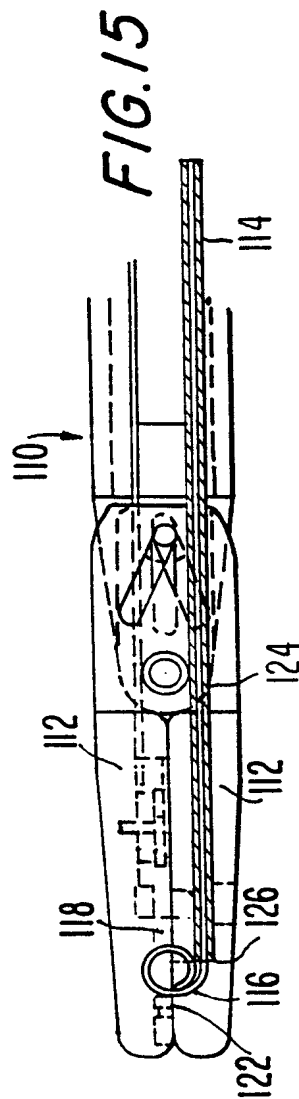
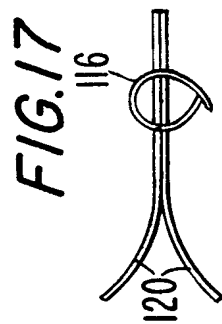
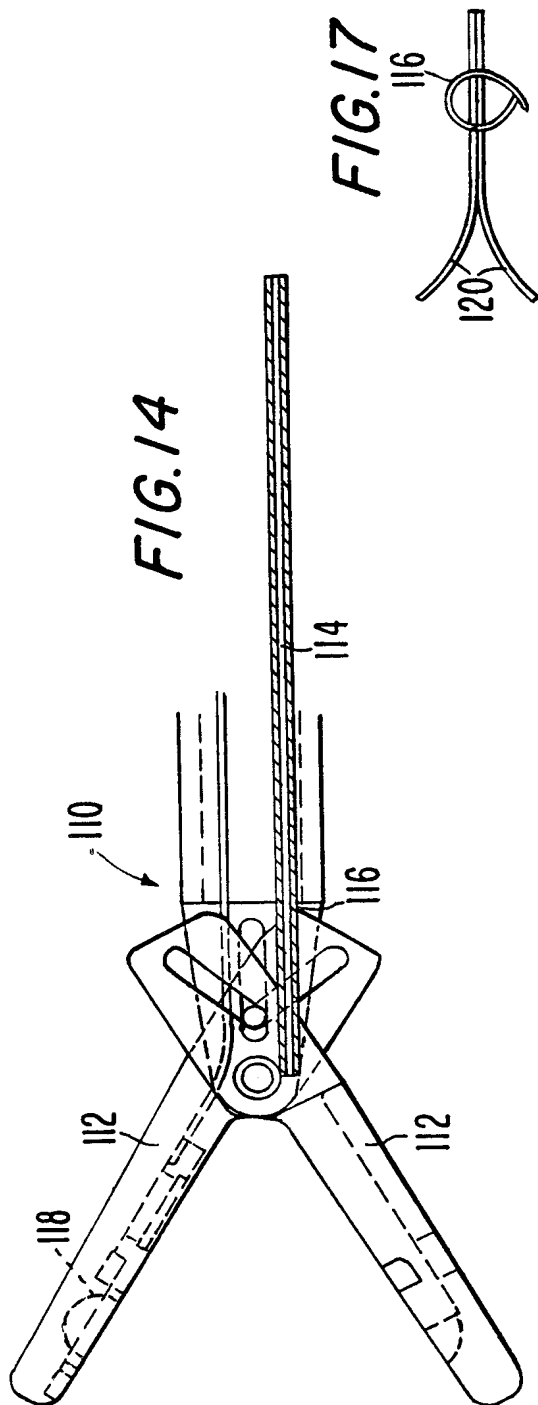
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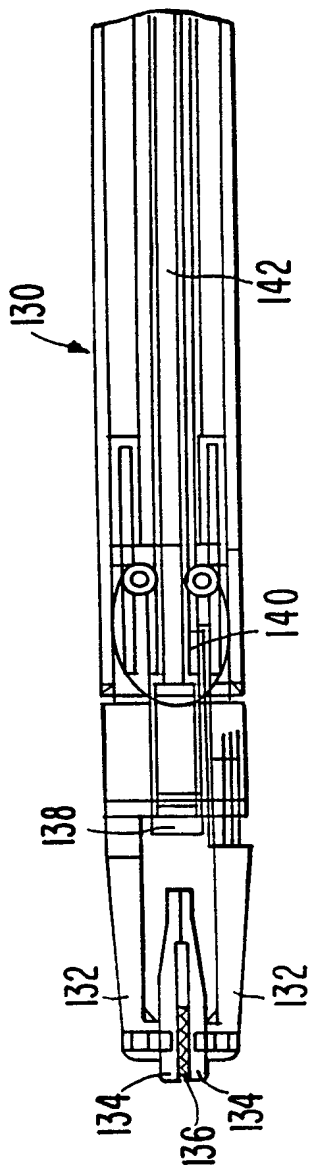


FIG. 18

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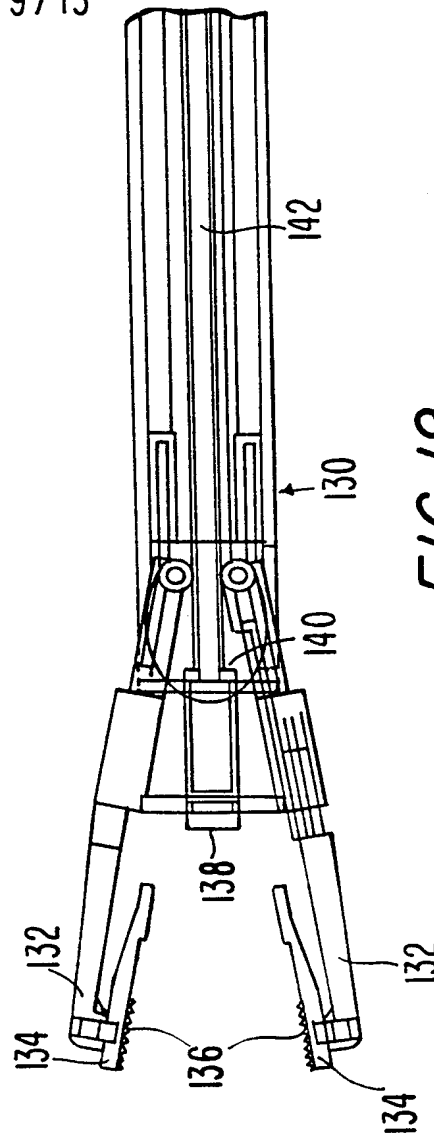
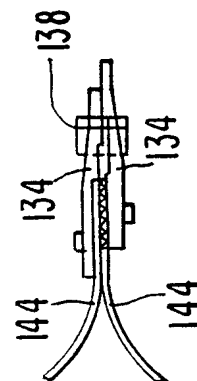


FIG. 19

FIG. 20



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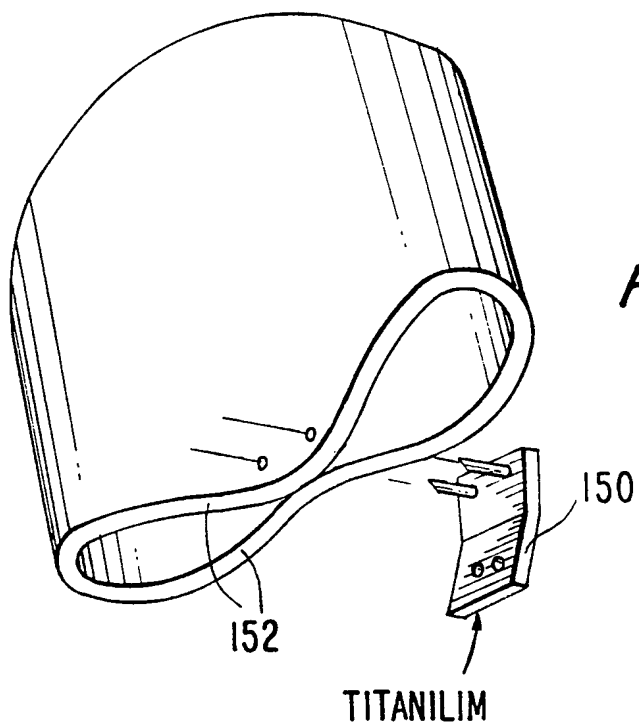


FIG. 22

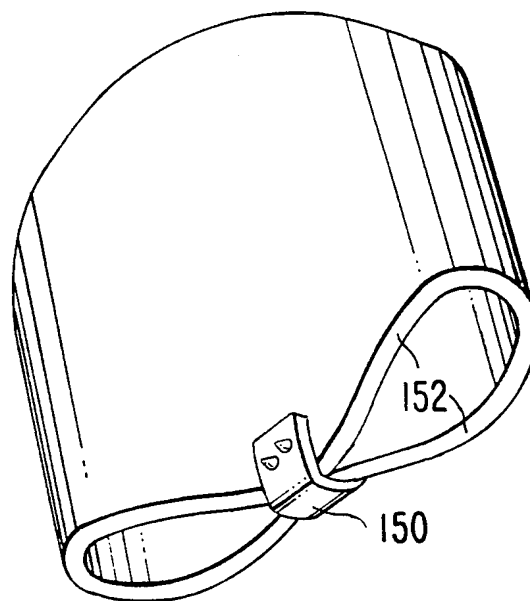
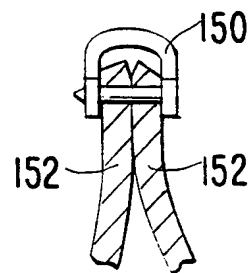


FIG. 23



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FIG. 24

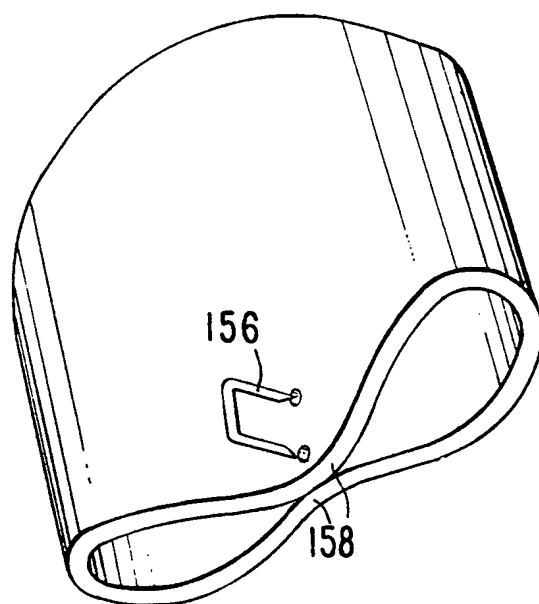
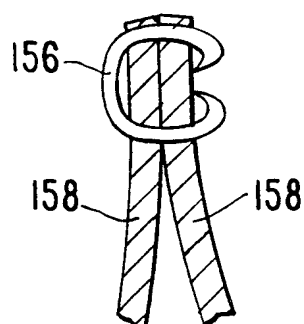


FIG. 25



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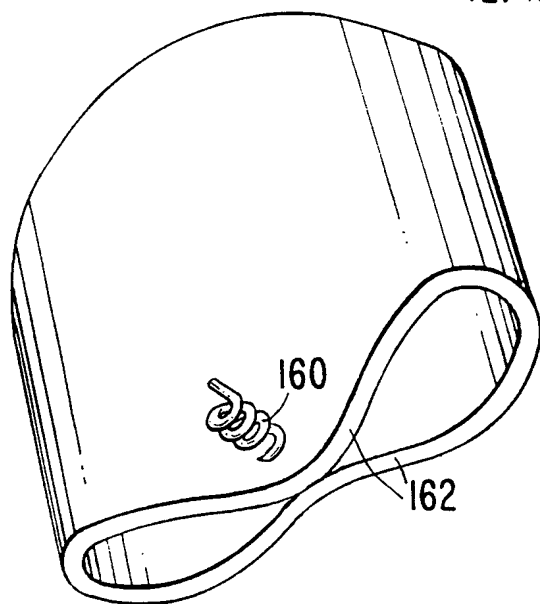


FIG. 26

FIG. 27

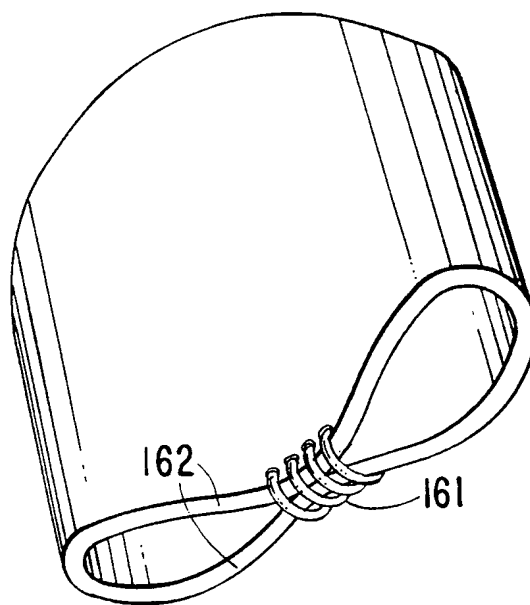
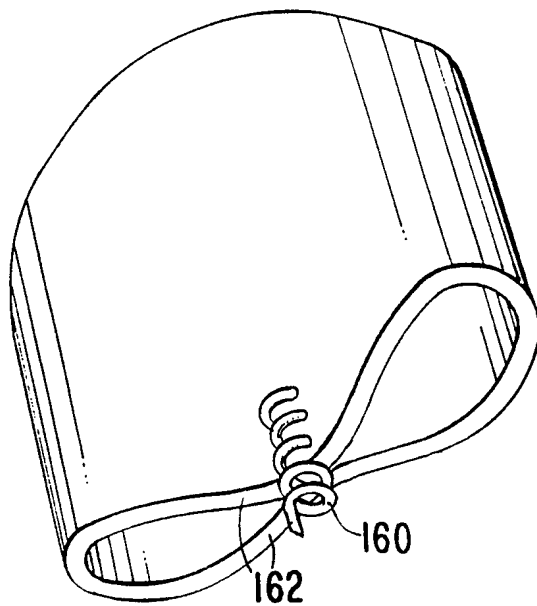


FIG. 28



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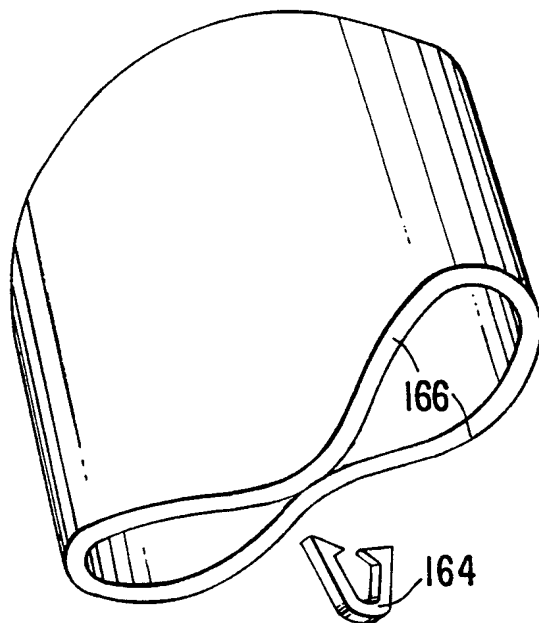
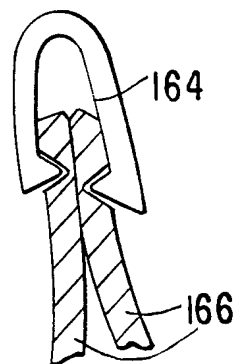


FIG. 29

FIG. 30



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

 International application No.
 PCT/US98/13240

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(6) :A61B 17/10

US CL :606/139

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 606/139, 142, 143, 151, 205-207, 216, 217, 219-221

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

APS

Search Terms: heart, valve, coapt, clip, forceps

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 3,378,010 A (CODLING et al) 16 April 1968, whole document.	1, 7-14
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Y		2-6
A	US 5,520,701 A (LERCH) 28 May 1996, whole document.	16
A	US 5,634,932 A (SCHMIDT) 03 June 1997, whole document.	16

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Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

☐

See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:	*T* later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
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L document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	*Z* document member of the same patent family
O document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	
P document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	

Date of the actual completion of the international search

18 SEPTEMBER 1998

Date of mailing of the international search report

19 OCT 1998

 Name and mailing address of the ISA/US
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